

GEAR UP

AN ESSENTIAL BOOT BY THE BACK DOOR

The passing of the vernal equinox here in Aspen signifies two things: the days are getting longer, and snow, sunshine and rain showers are all climatic possibilities, often within the same hour. With weather conditions varying by the minute, versatile footwear is critical for springtime success. It is common practice in ski towns to leave a pair of all-purpose shoes by the door that can be quickly slipped on for shoveling duty or a beverage run. The footwear in my entryway that have been getting the most use lately, particularly as we slide into mud season, are the Chasseur Leather Lined Boot from Le Chameau.

At first glance they are a typical green rubber boot, but the Chasseur improves upon the traditional Wellington silhouette with the addition of a few key features: a full-length, waterproof zipper that allows them to be removed without dislocating a rib and an all-terrain outsole that will comfortably take you from snowy morning to slushy afternoon. The leather lining is also surprisingly supple. I've worn them briefly without socks to retrieve a paper from the driveway but wouldn't recommend extended barefoot usage.

As with many great brands, Le Chameau originated out of necessity. In 1927 Claude Chamot was running an agricultural products store in Cherbourg, France, and was inundated with complaints from his customers – primarily fishermen and farmers – about the comfort and durability of their boots. Using personal designs and vulcanized rubber, Chamot took the matter of his friends' feet into his own hands, developing a boot suitable for tradespeople on land and at sea. Chamot's hand-crafted boots were a sensation in Normandy and quickly gained a following throughout France.



As the company grew, Chamot opened a factory in Casablanca and renamed the enterprise Le Chameau, "The Camel," a gracious nod to Morocco and a clever play on words.

Today, each pair of Le Chameau are still handmade by a "maître bottier" who has undergone an intensive nine-month training program. The company responsible for the first leather-lined rubber boot is still innovating, incorporating modern fibers like Kevlar into their traditional processes to create a long-lasting product.

While many might associate wellies with the English countryside, I can assure you that these boots are as at home making coffee runs in the Rockies as they are flushing red grouse in Yorkshire. The Chasseur delivers the highest levels of craftsmanship and a bespoke mindset in the last place you would think to look for them – a rubber boot. They will be by my door for years to come.

– Oliver Sharpe

GET YOUR OWN

Le Chameau
Chasseur Leather
Lined Boot
\$489

IN THIS ISSUE

PAST THE ROUNDABOUT ... 4 WRITTEN WORD ... 6

HAPPENINGS ... 7 MUSIC BEAT ... 7

COVER STORY ... 8 BIG SCREEN ... 10

WINE N' DINE ... 11 CALENDAR ... 12

Top 5 Movies

1. "Black Panther" \$26.7 million
2. "Tomb Raider" \$23.6 million
3. "I Can Only Imagine" \$17.1 million
4. "A Wrinkle in Time" \$16.3 million
5. "Love, Simon" \$11.8 million
(imdb.com, March 16-18)

Top 5 TV Shows

1. "The Big Bang Theory" (Thursday) CBS
2. "NCIS" (Tuesday) CBS
3. "Young Sheldon" (Thursday) CBS
4. "The Voice" (Monday) NBC
5. "American Idol" (Sunday) ABC
(Nielsen, week of March 5-11)

Top 5 Albums

1. "The Greatest Showman Soundtrack" Various Artists
2. "Seasons Change" by Scotty McCreery
3. "I Can Only Imagine" by MercyMe
4. "I'll Be Your Girl" by The Decemberists
5. "Evolve" by Imagine Dragons
(iTunes)

Top 5 Songs

1. "God's Plan" by Drake
2. "Perfect" by Ed Sheeran with Beyonce
3. "Finesse" by Bruno Mars & Cardi B
4. "Psycho" by Post Malone featuring Ty Dolla \$ign
5. "Meant to Be" by Bebe Rexha & Florida Georgia Line
(Billboard)

Editor's Pick

Dancing Into a Surprising Second Act



Emily Franc and Craig Black in 'Silent Ghost'
Photo by Rosalie O'Connor

In life, when it's time to move on, the best way to go is on your own terms and in high style. In that sense, we should all be so lucky as ballerina Emily Franc, who will be retiring after 10 full seasons with Aspen Santa Fe Ballet as soon as she's done with one last performance this Saturday night at 7:30 at the Aspen District Theatre.

As part of Aspen Santa Fe Ballet: An Evening With Pianist Joyce Yang, Franc and the rest of the company will be performing the world premiere of "Half/Cut/Split" by noted Finnish choreographer Jorma Elo. Elo collaborated with renowned pianist Yang on this new ballet set to Robert Schumann's "Carnaval," and Yang will be performing the musical accompaniment live Saturday night. As a sendoff, you could do a lot worse, and it's sure to register as one of the highlights of Franc's career.

"Joyce Yang is spectacular," said Franc, "and it's always exciting to get the chance to perform with a live musician." It's a fine bookend for a dancer who got to perform with Mikhail Baryshnikov in Aszure Barton's "Come In" on an international tour early in her career.

"Working with Baryshnikov is a dream for anyone, and I was nervous," said Franc. "I was 22, just out of Juilliard. I was very intimidated."

The experience showed her she had what it takes, though, and right after that, Franc made her way west to join ASFB, where she has been one of the company's shining lights for the last decade. It's all the more impressive when you consider that in 2012, she faced the prospect of never dancing professionally again after injuring her foot.

"(My surgeon) wasn't 100 percent sure he was going to be able to help me," said Franc, "and I thought, 'Well, I better find a plan B.'"

The surgery, as it turned out, was a success, allowing Franc to dance for five more years, but the wakeup call of her foot injury started Franc down a new path that she plans to take up when she moves to join her husband, a fellow dancer, in Portland, Ore. Fittingly enough, for one who spent so much time in Aspen (but curiously enough, for a dancer), Franc intends to get into real estate.

"I sometimes shudder to tell people because it's such a departure," she laughed.

Looking back on her time with ASFB and wondering "how to sum up the most important part of your life in one minute," Franc took a moment before going on. "Dancing for this company," she said, "has been the honor of my lifetime."

There have been the bravura performances, the world premieres, the travel to "probably 150 different cities," but it's more than that. For all intents and purposes, this is where Franc came of age. This company has been her family for a decade, and that's what Franc will really take with her to Portland.

"I grew up here," she said of her time with ASFB. "I'm going to miss it so much. It's made me stronger. It's helped me define who I am going forward into business. The opportunity to develop my voice in such an incredible place has been a real honor."

And for Aspen's plentiful ballet fans, it's been a great honor seeing you develop that voice, Emily. Thank you.

– Todd Hartley

ON THE COVER

Spring skiing on Aspen Mountain. Photo by Jeremy Swanson.